

## COVID-19 – Coping with uncertainty during the pandemic

COVID-19 has severely disrupted many aspects of our usual way of life, creating an air of uncertainty for everyone. With restrictions being changed dynamically across the UK many of us are still left with a cloud of uncertainty effecting various parts of our lives as we know things can change quickly. With plans in place to ease restrictions across the UK many are left wondering whether this is final, or whether this too will change again.

Anxieties are often linked to lack of control, uncertainty is a key factor as to why many of us are experiencing heightened anxieties and stresses during the pandemic. We all have different tolerances of uncertainty and it affects us all differently but either way, it is important to manage uncertainty to help alleviate associated stresses.

Here are some tips to help below which can help you to reduce your anxiety and stress levels by learning to cope with uncertainty better, improve your tolerance of uncertainty and challenge your need for certainty.

### Work on things you CAN control

Focus on things that are within your control rather than worrying about things that are not. We often use worrying as a tool to try and prepare for future scenarios but this is often a waste of your energy and an unnecessary cause of stress.

By focussing on things we can control we become more of a pro-active problem solver rather than being a worrier. For example, COVID-19 is out of your control but you can be proactive and take control of your hygiene, clean surfaces etc. and do various things to protect yourself and others from it. How COVID could continue to affect the easing of restrictions in the future, or how we can travel abroad is out of your control but you can have a plan A and a plan B so you are prepared for whatever the situation is.

Take charge of what you can and make the most out of whatever happens. This will ease anxieties stemming from uncertainty.

### Question your need for certainty overall

Certainty is something that brings us security in life, but when you think about it, how certain are most things? Do we ever have a job for life? Good health for life? Certainty of what tomorrow

may bring? Constantly striving for certainty can only bring us worry and anxiety as nothing will ever really be truly certain.

We often have a habit of assuming the worst in situations of uncertainty, but how often does this worse case scenario actually play out? Rarely if at all? We live day to day with the slim chance of losing a job, having an accident, falling ill so why do we struggle to live with the small chance that the worst case scenario will actually play out in certain situations when the likelihood is just as slim?

Accept the uncertainty. When you feel yourself begin to worry remind yourself of the above and try to let the worry go. Uncertainty is a part of life, it is how people deal with it which affects them the most.

More tips and articles on how to help cope with uncertainty

<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/9-tips-for-dealing-with-uncertainty-and-anxiety/>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/dealing-with-uncertainty.htm#:~:text=Allow%20yourself%20to%20feel%20the%20uncertainty.&text=Focus%20on%20the%20present%20moment,you%20anchored%20in%20the%20present.>

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/seven\\_ways\\_to\\_cope\\_with\\_uncertainty](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/seven_ways_to_cope_with_uncertainty)

<https://www.bupa.co.uk/newsroom/ourviews/cope-with-uncertainty>

More information

If you would like to view the Webinar on '**Coping with uncertainty during the pandemic**' this is being delivered live on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 12pm**, please use the following link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5910585697635079695>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.

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